

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PDIP, US, NU

SUBJECT: HARRY BODAN SHIELDS TRIP REACTIONS

1. DURING A RECEPTION ON JANUARY 10 AT GUATEMALAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, DR. HARRY BODAN SHIELDS, VICE FOREIGN MINISTER, SOUGHT ME OUT TO TELL ME HOW GRATEFUL HE WAS FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S INVITATION TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES. IN PARTICULAR, HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE GREATLY ENJOYED AND PROFITED FROM HIS MEETINGS WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY INGERSOLL AND UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON. AS A RESULT OF THESE MEETINGS, HE SAID THAT HE HAD ACQUIRED A MUCH BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE US POSITION ON A WIDE RANGE OF TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS.

2. HE STATED THAT HE FAVORED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CLOSER ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN LATIN AMERICAN AND THE UNITED STATES. IN HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH LATIN COLLEAGUES IN WASHINGTON, HE DISCOVERED THAT A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES FAVORED THE CREATION OF SPECIAL US TRADE PREFERENCES FOR LATIN AMERICA, ALONG THE LINES OF THE EEC PREFERENCES FOR AFRICA AND ASIA. HIS LATIN COLLEAGUES WOULD NOT, OF COURSE, ADMIT THIS IN PUBLIC FOR FEAR OF BEING ACCUSED OF FAVORING INCREASED ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE ON THE UNITED STATES. NEVERTHELESS, HE FELT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT IN THE REGION FOR THE NOTION OF SPECIAL LATIN PREFERENCES, AND THAT THE LATIN COUNTRIES HAD

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MOST TO GAIN.

3. BODAN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND DISCUSSIONS WITH US OFFICIALS HAD MADE HIM APPRECIATE THE IMMENSE EFFORT MADE BY THE FORD ADMINISTRATION TO PREVENT THE US TRADE LAW FROM BECOMING A PROTECTIONIST INSTRUMENT. HE WAS IMPRESSED BY THE STRENGTH OF THE US INDUSTRIAL LOBBIES AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE DIFFICULTIES THAT FACED THE ADMINISTRATION IN ITS SUPPORT OF A MORE OPEN, LIBERAL WORLD TRADING SYSTEM. HE SAID THAT THE LATIN COUNTRIES HAD BEEN REMISS IN GIVING THE UNITED STATES THE CONSIDERABLE CREDIT IT DESERVED.

4. SINCE BOADAN'S RETURN FROM HIS VISIT TO THE UNITES STATES, I PERSONALLY HAVE DETECTED SIGNS OF WARMTH, ENTHUSIASM AND SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING TOWARDS US THAT DID NOT EXIST BEFORE. IT WAS, I BELIEVE, AMATURING EXPERIENCE FOR A THOUGHTFUL, SOMETIMES PRICKLY YOUNG VICE FOREIGN MINISTER. THE BODAN TRIP DEMONSTRATES THE POTENTIAL VALUE TO BE DERIVED FROM WELL-PLANNED AND ORGANIZED EXPOSURE TO THE UNITED STATES OF KEY LATIN OFFICIALS, SURPRISINGLY MANY OF WHICH ARE COMPLETELY UNFAMILIAR WITH US GOVERNMENT PROCESSES. THEBERGE

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